

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8121

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, NP

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS CONTROL

REF: STATE 076148

1. GON STILL IN PROCESS OF STUDYING EFFECT OF BAN ON CANNABIS CULTIVATION ON NEPALESE FARMERS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATE SOURCES OF INCOME. PRELIMINARY STUDY RECENTLY COMPLETED IN WESTERN HILLS REGION, AND TWO TEAMS, INCLUDING REPS OF NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, SCHEDULED TO LEAVE SHORTLY TO CARRY OUT STUDY IN TERAJ REGION. UPON COMPLETION THESE STUDIES, GON WILL PRESUMABLY MAKE POLICY DECISION ON TYPE OF APPROACH AND SPECIFIC PROGRAMS IT WISHES TO ADOPT TO OFFSET ECONOMIC HARDSHIP ATTENDING LOSSES OF REVENUES FROM GANJA CULTIVATION.

2. AT PRESENT, EMBASSY HAS LITTLE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON REAL PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING SUBSTITUTE CROPS IN CANNABIS GROWING AREAS. WE HAVE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT GON DEVOTING INCREASING ATTENTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF TOBACCO CULTIVATION IN EASTERN TERAJ AREAS IN WHICH GANJA WAS LEGALLY LICENSED CROP UNTIL LAST SUMMER. PROBLEMS OF SUBSTITUTE CROPS ARE MENTIONED LESS FREQUENTLY

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BY GON OFFICIALS AS MAJOR PROBLEM.

3. QUESTION OF GANJA CULTIVATION IN WESTERN HILLS IS MORE COMPLICATED. MOST GANJA GROWS WILD AND IS HARVESTED BY VILLAGERS TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR CASH INCOME. GON'S APPROACH IN THIS AREA HAS NOT BEEN ONE OF SEEKING CROP SUBSTITUTE PER SE, BUT GENERATION OF ALTERNATE SOURCES OF CASH INCOME. AS YET THESE EFFORTS ARE NOT FAR ADVANCED, BUT GON IS HOPEFUL THAT VARIETY OF AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICLTURAL PROGRAMS NOW IN PLANNING STAGE AND OPENING OF AREA THROUGH CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO GIVE NEW IMPETUS TO DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN HILLS AREA.

4. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW AND REPORT ON CROP SUBSTITUTION IN TERAJ AS WELL AS OTHER ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FACTORS BEARING ON PROSPECTS FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL LEGISLATION.
CARGO

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